

Message Text

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QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGR
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SUBJ: YUGOSLAV UNDERSECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS LONCAR
ASSESES BELGRADE NAM CONFERENCE

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1. ON AUGUST 2 THE AMBASSADOR CALLED ON YUGOSLAV UNDER-
SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS BUDIMIR LONCAR TO DELIVER
PRESIDENT CARTER'S RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT TITO'S FOURTH OF
JULY MESSAGE (REFTEL). THE AMBASSADOR ALSO PROVIDED LONCAR
WITH THE U.S. POSITION ON CERTAIN LAW OF THE SEA ISSUES AND
WITH A PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A JOINT US-YUGOSLAV MILITARY

WORKING GROUP (REPORTED SEPTELS).

2. ON CONCLUSION OF DISCUSSION OF THESE ISSUES, LONCAR RAISED THE NAM BELGRADE CONFERENCE, ASKING THE AMBASSADOR FOR HIS EVALUATION. AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT U.S. HAD INDEED RECEIVED "HONORABLE MENTION" A NUMBER OF TIMES IN THE FINAL DECLARATION, BUT IN WAYS THAT DO NOT IN THE LEAST PLEASE US.

3. EMPHASIZING THAT HE WAS SPEAKING PERSONALLY AMBASSADOR SAID THAT ON THE MAJOR ISSUE OF INTEREST TO YUGOSLAVIA -- THE STRUGGLE OVER THE DEFINITION ON NON-ALIGNMENT -- IT APPEARS YUGOSLAVIA WON ABOUT 95 PERCENT OF THE BATTLE WITH THE CUBANS. HOWEVER, THERE HAD NOT BEEN AS MUCH PROGRESS AS PERHAPS THE YUGOSLAVS HAD WISHED ON THE ISSUE OF HOW TO ORGANIZE THE WORK OF THE NAM COORDINATING BUREAU SO AS TO INSURE "DEMOCRATIZATION" OF ITS WORK.

4. IT WAS ALSO INTERESTING THAT THERE APPARENTLY WAS MORE SUBSTANTIVE DEBATE ON ISSUES THAN AT EARLIER MEETINGS; IT APPEARS THAT THE "MODERATES" WERE MORE COHESIVE THAN EVER BEFORE. "PERHAPS," AMBASSADOR EAGLEBURGER CONTINUED, "WE HAVE SEEN FOR THE FIRST TIME A HISTORIC SHIFT IN NAM THINKING. CERTAINLY IN THE PAST THE MOVEMENT HAS REGARDED THE PRINCIPAL 'THREAT' TO BE FROM THE 'IMPERIALISTS,' 'COLONIALISTS,' AND 'NEO-COLONIALISTS.' NOW PERHAPS THE MOVEMENT IS COMING TO REALIZE THAT THE MAJOR THREAT TO TRUE NON-ALIGNMENT IS FROM

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ANOTHER DIRECTION."

5. THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT WHILE THE WAY THE DEBATE ON THIS MAJOR, FUNDAMENTAL ISSUE HAD COME OUT AT BELGRADE SHOULD PLEASE YUGOSLAVIA, IT IS PROBABLE THAT THE SAME BATTLES WILL HAVE TO BE FOUGHT AGAIN IN HAVANA. GRANTED, THE BELGRADE DECLARATION WILL BE SOMETHING OF A PRECEDENT, BUT IF A LARGE NUMBER OF STATES STAY AWAY FROM HAVANA, THERE COULD BE TROUBLE FOR THE MODERATE POSITION.

6. VIEWING THE BELGRADE DECLARATION FROM THE PARTICULAR PERSPECTIVE OF THE UNITED STATES, ESPECIALLY HOW IT WILL BE VIEWED BY AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION, AMBASSADOR EAGLEBURGER EXPRESSED GREAT CONCERN. HE RECOGNIZED THAT ON REGIONAL ISSUES THE REGIONAL WORKING GROUPS HAVE THE DECISIVE SAY, BUT THE REPEATED ATTACKS ON THE UNITED STATES IN THE FINAL DOCUMENT WOULD BE HARD FOR U.S. PUBLIC OPINION TO SWALLOW. TO SEE ZIONISM REPEATEDLY LINKED WITH RACISM, FOR EXAMPLE, WILL BE REPUGNANT TO ALL AMERICANS, AS WILL THE REFERENCES TO PUERTO RICO WHICH IS AN UNACCEPTABLE INTERFERENCE IN OUR INTERNAL AFFAIRS. THE AMBASSADOR RECALLED THAT RECENTLY ONE YUGOSLAV FOREIGN SECRETARIAT OFFICIAL HAD ADVISED HIM "DON'T TAKE

THOSE PORTIONS OF THE FINAL DOCUMENT SO SERIOUSLY." "YUGOSLAVS TELL ME FOR ELEVEN MONTHS OF EVERY YEAR WE MUST TAKE THE NAM SERIOUSLY. NOW YOU TELL ME FOR ONE MONTH IN BELGRADE NOT TO TAKE WHAT IT SAYS SERIOUSLY. I AM AFRAID WE CANNOT LET YOU PICK AND CHOOSE THIS WAY."

8. THE AMBASSADOR, AGAIN EMPHASIZING HE WAS NOT SPEAKING ON INSTRUCTIONS, SAID THAT IT IS NOT DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND THE AWKWARD SITUATION IN WHICH YUGOSLAVIA FOUND ITSELF WITH REGARD TO THE REGIONAL ISSUES AT THE BELGRADE CONFERENCE. FROM ITS OWN PERSPECTIVE, YUGOSLAVIA HAD "NEITHER ANY MEANS NOR ANY PARTICULAR REASON TO TRY TO INFLUENCE THE LANGUAGE PROPOSED BY THE REGIONAL WORKING GROUPS." THE AMBASSADOR RECOGNIZED YUGOSLAVIA WOULD NATURALLY FOCUS ON THE FUNDAMENTAL ISSUE MOST
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IMPORTANT TO IT, I.E. NAM ORIENTATION AND DIRECTION. HOWEVER, THE AMBASSADOR WARNED, THERE IS DANGER THAT MANY OTHER PORTIONS OF THE BELGRADE DECLARATION WILL BE READ BY THE AMERICAN PUBLIC AS AN INSULT TO THE UNITED STATES AND THAT THIS COULD GIVE AMMUNITION TO THOSE WHO OPPOSE PRESIDENT CARTER'S POLICY TO SEEK AN UNDERSTANDING AND A CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE WITH THE NAM.

9. LONCAR SAID THAT MAIN ISSUE AT CONFERENCE FOR GOY HAD INDEED, BEEN THE DEFINITION AND ORIENTATION OF NON-ALIGNMENT. THERE WAS, HE SAID, A DEEP STRUGGLE, BUT GOY SUCCEEDED IN KEEPING THE NAM MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. BECAUSE THE YUGOSLAV'S MAIN AIM HAD BEEN TO PRESERVE TRUE NON-ALIGNMENT, THE GOY HAD TO BE MORE FLEXIBLE AND NOT IRRITATE THOSE STATES WHICH TOOK A "SMALL, ONE-SIDED APPROACH TO CERTAIN ISSUES." LONCAR CONTINUED "THERE ARE MANY RADICAL WORDS IN THE FINAL DOCUMENTS WHICH WE DO NOT LIKE. WE DO NOT LIKE INCLUDING SO MANY 'ISMS.'" BUT IF WE HAD OPPOSED THIS, OUR OPPONENTS WOULD HAVE BEEN PLEASED, BECAUSE THEY WOULD HAVE RECEIVED MORE SUPPORT ON THE MAIN ISSUE."

10. LONCAR SAID THAT THE YUGOSLAVS HAD REALLY TWO OBJECTIVES AT THE BELGRADE MEETING. FIRST WAS THE ISSUE OF PRINCIPLE: THE DEFINITION OF NON-ALIGNMENT. SECOND WAS TO HAVE A THOROUGH DISCUSSION OF HOW THE MOVEMENT IS TO OPERATE IN THE FUTURE.

11. LONCAR CONTINUED: "WE SOUGHT TO BUILD A COMMON ATTITUDE THAT THE MOVEMENT MUST ACT DEMOCRATICALLY. THAT IS WHY WE CONDUCTED THE MEETINGS IN SUCH AN OPEN FASHION WITH AN ATMOSPHERE OF FREE TALK. THIS, TOO, WILL BE AN IMPORTANT PRECEDENT FOR HAVANA." HE ADDED "IN MY OPINION, WE HAD 99 PERCENT OF THE MEMBERS ON OUR SIDE ON THIS ISSUE. WE EVEN TRIED TO AVOID WORDS LIKE 'CRISIS' OR EVEN 'REDEFINE', BECAUSE WE DO NOT WANT
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TO ADMIT ANY POSSIBILITY OF CHANGING THE DIRECTION OF THE MOVEMENT. OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO 'FURTHER AFFIRM' THE DIRECTION OF THE MOVEMENT."

12. TURNING TO PROSPECTS FOR HAVANA, LONCAR SAID "WE HAVE NOT OVERCOME ALL OUR DILEMMAS. BUT WE SHALL SEE. WE HAVE A GOOD BASIS FROM WHICH TO FIGHT ON UNTIL HAVANA. WE WILL CONTINUE TO WORK ENERGETICALLY AMONG THE NON-ALIGNED TO CONVINCE THEM THAT THEY SHOULD GO TO HAVANA. IF THERE IS TO BE A CHALLENGE IN HAVANA, THEN ALL THE MORE REASON TO BE PRESENT, TO BE ON THE SPOT TO GIVE AN ANSWER." LONCAR THEN OBSERVED "IT COULD HAPPEN WE WILL CHANGE OUR VIEW ON THIS (I.E., GOING TO HAVANA). BUT WE WILL WORK VERY ENERGETICALLY NOW. MAYBE SOME HEADS OF STATE MAY NOT CHOOSE TO GO TO HAVANA, BUT MEMBER COUNTRIES SHOULD BE REPRESENTED THERE."

13. ACCORDING TO LONCAR, "THE CUBANS ARE MAKING A MISTAKE IN SOME WAYS. THERE IS A LOT OF SUPPORT FOR CUBA'S ROLE IN AFRICA. MANY AFRICAN STATES DO NOT CONSIDER WHO IS BEHIND THE CUBANS. THEY SAY, 'THE ENEMY OF MY ENEMY IS MY FRIEND.' BUT WHERE THE CUBANS ERR IS IN WRAPPING THEIR SPECIFIC ACTS IN AFRICA INTO AN IDEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK. IF THEY WERE PRAGMATIC, IF THEY JUST WENT ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS, THEY WOULD HAVE MORE SUCCESS. BUT THIS POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL CONTROVERSY IS HELPING US. THE CUBANS ARE TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH TODAY WHAT THEY MIGHT BETTER POSTPONE UNTIL AFTER HAVANA."

14. LONCAR ADDED THAT THERE WERE PROBABLY SOME FIFTY TO SEVENTY STATES THAT SUPPORT THE CUBAN ROLE IN ANGOLA. BUT ON THE ISSUE OF THE CUBAN EFFORT TO IDENTIFY THE NAM WITH THE SOVIET BLOC THEY PROBABLY HAVE, AT A MAXIMUM, ONLY SOME FIVE ALLIES (AND EVEN THOSE ARE NOT REALLY CONVINCED BY THE CUBAN POSITION, BUT GO ALONG BECAUSE THEY HAVE TO).

15. AMBASSADOR EAGLEBURGER COMMENTED THAT THERE IS OBVIOUSLY MUCH IN COMMON BETWEEN THE TWO ASSESSMENTS OF THE NAM BELGRADE

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CONFERENCE OUTCOME. "BUT," HE WARNED LONCAR, "THERE IS NO OTHER COUNTRY IN THE WORLD IN WHICH THE CONDUCT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IS SO DEPENDENT ON PUBLIC OPINION AS IS THE UNITED STATES. THAT IS WHY I EMPHASIZE TO YOU THE IMPACT OF SOME OF THE LANGUAGE IN THE FINAL DECLARATION ON AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION."

16. IN CONCLUSION, LONCAR SAID HE BELIEVED THAT THE BELGRADE CONFERENCE HAS SHOWN "THERE IS GREAT INTEREST IN KEEPING THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT TRULY NON-ALIGNED. WE KNOW THE BATTLE WILL GO ON BUT IT IS NOT HOPELESS FOR US."

17. COMMENT: NOTHING LONCAR SAID SURPRISES US EXCEPT HIS EXTRAORDINARY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT TITO - OR INDEED, YUGOSLAVIA ITSELF - COULD FIND IT INADVISABLE TO ATTEND NEXT YEAR'S HAVANA SUMMIT (PARA 12 ABOVE). THAT REMARK COULD HARDLY HAVE COME SPONTANEOUSLY FROM SUCH A SENIOR AND SEASONED OFFICIAL AS LONCAR. IT CERTAINLY PROVIDES ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE, IF ANY WAS NEEDED, OF HOW SERIOUSLY THE YUGOSLAVS REGARD THEIR BATTLE WITH THE CUBANS, AND OF CURRENT YUGOSLAV UNCERTAINTY WHETHER THE LID CAN BE KEPT ON UNTIL (OR AT) HAVANA.. EAGLEBURGER UNQUOTE VANCE

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